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# THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Sons fills big shoes in father's ministry role

By Carmon Keith  
North American Mission Board

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Philip Vandercook's first birthday was a family affair years ago. There were toys, cards, and the traditional birthday cake, but the "Happy Birthday" chorus wasn't sung around a dining room table. It was sung on board a cargo ship docked in the port of New Orleans. Present with his parents were "extended" family — seafarers from India.

Philip's first experience on board a ship was when he was six weeks old. "Philip was born into seamen's ministry," says his father, John Vandercook, who became a missionary to seafarers in 1963.

"The day Philip was born," John remembers, "we had a big gathering of seafarers at our house, and I had to leave in the middle of it to take my wife to the hospital."

During the early years of Philip's life, the seamen's ministry center was located in the Vandercooks' home. "As a child, I never thought about the center being in our home," Philip recalls. "There were people from all over the world — different countries, cultures, and languages — but

it didn't seem strange. It was more of a lifestyle for us.

Whatever was going on in our family — if there was some special family event — the seamen who were visiting the center joined in as part of the family."

The blending of cultures gave Philip a worldview impossible for most children. "I enjoyed going on the ships, and I made some very interesting friends. Many of the seafarers treated me like one of their own. They were often away from their wives and their own children for long periods of time. They made me sort of a substitute son."

"I remember when I was a boy in Royal Ambassadors how the missions stories would take us to faraway places and tell us about missionaries working there. For me, it was especially interesting because I could always place a face of someone I met with the country being studied. I could almost always personally relate to the stories."

"Now, RAs come to our center to learn about missions from me and my staff. They help out in the center and on the ships, and they are learning that you don't have to go far away to minister to internationals. They are just a ship away."

While Philip was in college preparing for a career in engineering, he began serving as part-time chaplain at the New Orleans port. He enjoyed the work and decided to continue.

His sense of call came not as a blinding light or grand revelation but as a gradual assurance of knowing God was affirming his ministry with seafarers.

When John Vandercook retired in September 1991,



MINISTRY CONTINUES — Philip Vandercook (right) has followed in the footsteps of his father, John (left) in directing ministries to seamen in New Orleans. John is holding his granddaughter and Philip's daughter, Anna Katherine. (Photos courtesy of NAMB/Philip Vandercook)

Philip was asked to become full-time director of the seamen's center.

"Dad's still involved, but he knows that this is now under my direction," says Philip. "He's the one I go to for advice and encouragement. One of the best lessons I've learned from Dad is that our call to ministry isn't to a place — it's a call to have a heart for people. All people need to hear about Jesus. Right now, I'm working with seafarers, but my ministry is to anyone with needs."

John Vandercook admits he's human enough to be proud of his son.

"I don't know if it ever crossed my mind that Philip would be involved in seamen's

ministry. My wife and I prayed that God would call our children into service if that was his will." All four of John's children are active in ministry.

Recently, Philip and his wife were enjoying a family event of their own. At the baby dedication of their daughter, Anna Catherine, the usual family members were present.

As was the case on Philip's first birthday, new extended family members were on hand, too. They were taking pictures and admiring the little girl.

They were seafarers from Guyana, in port for a few days, and experiencing what it's like to be part of the Vandercook celebration — and the larger family of faith.



AND MANY MORE — A younger Philip Vandercook celebrated his first birthday many years ago aboard a cargo ship in New Orleans harbor.

### WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

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### BSSB mails Mormon video

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB) began Oct. 14 mailing free copies of a 70-minute video, "The Mormon Puzzle," to more than 38,000 Southern Baptist churches across the country.

The video, produced by the North American Mission Board, was introduced at the 1997 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in Dallas and designed as a resource for SBC messengers who will attend the 1998 convention meeting in Salt Lake City.

BSSB President James T. Draper Jr. said in a letter accompanying the video he hopes pastors "will preview this video and identify ways you can use it in your church."

If you will be sending messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention, plan training sessions next spring that include a showing of the video. Show it to the deacons, other leaders in your church and finally to your entire church family."

Additional copies of the video may be purchased through Baptist Book Stores or by calling 1-800-233-1123.

### Looking back

#### 10 years ago

Mississippi Baptists reach more than 70% of their \$40 million goal in the Mississippi Mission Endowment Campaign. "We can be proud of our churches," said Harry Vickery, of Greenville, general campaign manager. A total of \$27,875,830.95 has been pledged thus far.

#### 20 years ago

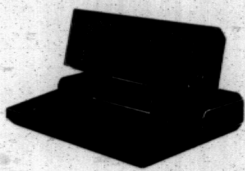
The Cambridge Square Mission of Gautier is constituted as the Cambridge Square Church. Started by First Church, Moss Point, the first action of the new church is to call Al Green as pastor. Green has served as the mission pastor since 1974.

#### 50 years ago

Cherry Creek Church, Pontotoc County, holds a homecoming day with Ivyloy Bishop, Southwide Secretary for Royal Ambassadors, preaching and Edwina Robinson, State WMU Secretary, reporting on her recent trip to the Baptist World Alliance meeting in Denmark.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# Eight simple words

A relative of a close friend died recently, tragically and much too soon. As I was making my way through the lush flowers and plants crowding the small room at the small funeral home in that small Mississippi town, one card attached to a particularly attractive floral arrangement jumped out at me. The card said, "With love and prayers from your Baptist family."

There was no further elaboration on the identities of the "Baptist family" members, but no further elaboration was really needed. I was moved by the tenderness of those those eight simple words gathered into a sentence that meant so much to loved ones suffering the cold, sudden bereavement of the day.

I haven't been able to get that kind gesture off my mind. It made me proud to be counted as a Mississippi Baptist, and it humbled (once again) my barely-contained egocentrism. It reminded me of the awesome responsibilities I enthusiastically assumed 30 years ago when I became a follower of Christ. It also made me think about a much wider use for those eight simple words.

Wouldn't it be great if every conversation between marital partners included those eight simple words? It goes without saying that politics and government at every level could use a few good people who would live by those eight simple words.

In the Kingdom work we have been given by our Savior, what would we be — what could we accomplish — if we addressed every single issue in Baptist life with those eight simple words?

How much more of *Jesus in us* could lost people discern if we approached one another

with those eight simple words?

What if we prefaced everything we say to each other with those eight simple words? What if we began every debate among us with those eight simple words?

We have opportunities daily to put that concept into action, and I pray each of us takes advantage of every opportunity to do so.

The attitude and spirit engendered in those eight simple words can go a long way toward convincing a lost and — lest we forget — observant world that they need Jesus.

Mississippi Baptists are coming up on a special, once-a-year opportunity to use those eight simple words, — when the Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting and ancillary gatherings take place Oct. 27-29 at First Church, Jackson.

Over the years, Mississippi Baptists have purposefully avoided the inflammatory rhetoric and unfortunate conduct that currently characterize too many segments of our corporate Southern Baptist life. For that, we can be grateful.

This year alone we have witnessed division in state Baptist conventions that will ultimately lead to outright, virtually-irreversible splits unless the cooperating members of those conventions stand up and utter to each other those eight simple words.

It is difficult to understand how so many of our brothers and sisters got to this

**"SON, REMEMBER: THE WORLD  
CAN DO ANYTHING THE  
CHURCH CAN DO, EXCEPT  
IT CANNOT SHOW GRACE."**



point, and it is my earnest prayer that God forbid such a tragedy in Mississippi Baptist life. We are one of the brightest beacons on the highest hill, and may it always be so.

On Oct. 27-29, we will have a chance to make that bright beacon burn even more intensely. In the dark world in which we live, that would be a welcome sight.

What can we do with eight simple words?

We can help to bring Mississippi and the world to Jesus — that's what.

## GUEST OPINION:



### *My right to grieve*

By Bob Chichester, Associate Pastor  
Bay Vista Church, Biloxi

move to outlying areas of the city. It wasn't long before the numerical growth ceased and attendance began to decline. Her people began to ask questions among themselves: "What's wrong? Why are we declining? Whose fault is it?"

As if she didn't have enough to contend with, Satan had invaded the hearts of some of her members and was making war against her from the inside.

It was into this scenario that a 29-year-old seminary student was called in 1984 to serve as part-time music and youth minister. The church disciplined him and his family, prayed for them, and ministered to them in a thousand different ways. The fondness that he and his family feel for her people is inexpressible in words.

Unfortunately, her decline continued throughout his four-year tenure. Her ministry was further complicated by a number of other devastating distractions:

- ◆ the immorality of another

staff member and his painful dismissal.

- ◆ the disrupting presence of a former pastor who had chosen to remain in the church following his retirement.

- ◆ the financial strain of a day care and school which operated in the red.

- ◆ the unfortunate attitudes of a few who could not grasp the concept of speaking and acting in love.

The young minister left her, seeking the full-time ministry for which he had prepared himself. As long distance relationships usually go, he slowly lost contact with her people as each of them lived out their lives in the different paths to which God had led them.

Though this minister served other fine congregations over the years that followed, all of whom loved him and his family just as much, he couldn't help but hold a special place in his heart for her, and he tried to keep in touch now and then. With every communication he

learned that her direction was unchanged.

This minister is older now, with a lot less hair and too many more pounds. Last week he received a letter from the secretary of this special church. It was a simple, straightforward message:

"I just wanted to inform you that the church is closing this Sunday. It was a painful decision but it was necessary. I knew that you would want to know."

I wasn't so sure that I wanted to know. Those were painful words to read. Later, as I talked on the phone with her former pastor who had just resigned the previous month, he described for me her final days. As he spoke, I felt as if he were talking about a dear relative who had lingered too long in intensive care. It seemed as if, out of weariness and frustration, her members had decided to withdraw life support. Not that I blame anyone; I'm sure that the decision was very personal and complex. I don't have the right to level criticism.

I do think I have the right to grieve, and I will. I will also wonder: If the angels in heaven rejoice by the millions every time a new soul is redeemed in Christ, what do they do when one of his churches dies? I won't know until I join Christ in the place he has prepared for me.

I only know that I will long for his joy a little more this Sunday.



# Baptist-Memphis, St. Joseph to discuss merger

By William H. Perkins Jr.  
Editor

St. Joseph Hospital in Memphis announced Oct. 17 that the medical facility's owner has initiated merger discussions with Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc. (BMHCS) in Memphis, which is affiliated with the state Baptist conventions of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Tennessee.

The announcement culminates a two-and-a-half year study by St. Joseph, a Roman Catholic hospital, that was designed to identify the best opportunities for partnerships with other health-care providers in the Memphis area.

The Sisters of St. Francis

Health Services, Inc., owner of St. Joseph Hospital on Overton Avenue at North Third Street in downtown Memphis, also reported that neighboring St. Jude Children's Research Center has been approached about the possibility of purchasing the St. Francis property and buildings which adjoin St. Jude.

A BMHCS spokesperson said the Oct. 17 press release from St. Joseph was a coordinated announcement approved by BMHCS, St. Joseph, and St. Jude.

According to the Oct. 17 press release, the purpose of the Baptist/St. Joseph merger discussions is to determine how best to combine the

strengths of the two institutions to better serve the health care needs of Memphis and the surrounding region served by St. Joseph.

The St. Joseph press release described the multi-step merger process as:

◆ Discussions between the two hospitals that will lead to development of a plan of action to be presented for approval to the trustees of the two institutions.

◆ Dialogues with physicians and community leaders to determine the needs of the downtown Memphis community in light of the merger.

◆ Integration of St. Joseph services and facilities into the BMHCS system before begin-

ning the merger implementation process.

The press release also noted that St. Jude has expressed a willingness to consider purchasing the St. Joseph property, and "Should an arrangement be realized, St. Jude Hospital officials would consider a lease agreement to allow St. Joseph operations to continue for a period of up to three years."

THE  
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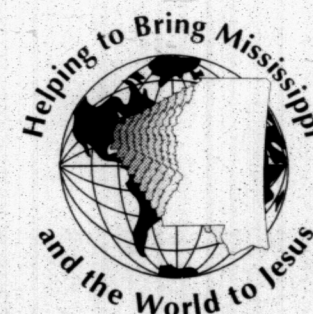
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## Youth Evangelism Conf. set Dec. 29-30

By William H. Perkins, Jr.  
Editor

The 1997 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference on Dec. 29-30 in A.E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton will feature Georgia pastor Dwight "Ike" Reighard and one of the most popular bands in contemporary Christian music.

Reighard, senior pastor of Northstar Church in Kennesaw, Ga., will keynote the event's general sessions as well as provide leadership for a number of breakout sessions to be held over the two-day period.

Reighard has also served as senior associate pastor of First Church, Atlanta, and

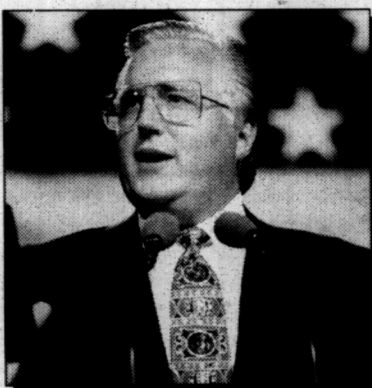
senior pastor of New Hope Church, Fayetteville. He was president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference in 1994 and president of the Georgia Baptist Convention in 1989-90.

NewSong, a collection of five Christian musicians based in Atlanta, will be in concert during the conference's evening session of Dec. 29. The group originated the oft-performed song, "Arise, My Love," and has enjoyed ten number-one tunes including "My Heart Is Already There" and "We Wear His Name."

Their current album, "Love Revolution," is a tribute to the abundant life found in Christ.

Hattiesburg-born Reggie Smith and his wife Ladye Love will lead worship music. The Nashville-based Smiths recently returned from Northern Ireland where they filmed a special gospel video with William McRae, a member of the British Parliament and a popular singer in his home country.

Reggie Smith is also currently touring with the Bill Gaither Vocal Band in addition to his solo career and special duet performances with his wife.



Reighard

Ventriloquist Dennis Lee of Dallas will perform with the 20-puppet "Nana Puddin Bunch." Lee has recorded two Christian contemporary albums and two children's albums, along with a number of "Nana Puddin Bunch" videos.

He won the competition at the 12th Annual International Ventriloquist Convention and was also given a special originality award for his unique performance.

Conference cost is \$5 per person; overnight accommodations and meals are not included. A complementary breakfast on the morning of Dec. 30 will be provided by MC for all participants who pre-register by Dec. 17.



NewSong

Groups may register at the conference but will not be able to attend the MC breakfast. Pre-registered groups may pick up breakfast tickets and prepared packets at the pre-registration table on the day of the conference.

For more information and to pre-register, contact Don Lum, MBCB Evangelism Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Dennis Lee

### MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE A.E. Wood Coliseum — Mississippi College, Clinton

#### December 29

##### Afternoon Session

noon .....Registration begins  
1:15 p.m. ....Youth leaders/  
counselors meeting  
2 p.m. ....Welcome  
Music-The Smiths  
Drama-Dennis Lee  
Worship Music-The Smiths  
Message-Ike Reighard  
4:00 p.m. ....Dismiss for dinner

##### Evening Session

6 p.m. ....Make-up counselors meeting  
6:30 p.m. ....Breakout groups  
7:15 p.m. ....Break  
7:45 p.m. ....NewSong concert  
9 p.m. ....Dismiss

#### December 30

##### Morning Session

7:15-8:30 a.m. ....MC Breakfast  
(pre-registration required)  
8:45 a.m. ....Breakout groups  
9:30 a.m. ....Break  
10 a.m. ....Worship music-The Smiths  
Message-Ike Reighard  
11 a.m. ....Lunch break

##### Afternoon Session

1 p.m. ....Breakout groups  
1:45 p.m. ....Break  
2 p.m. ....Drama-Dennis Lee  
Worship music-The Smiths  
Message-Ike Reighard  
3 p.m. ....Invitation & closing



# Clarke closing generates flood of memories

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

First of a two-part series

When Clarke College in Newton closed in May 1992, an era of Mississippi Baptist history came to an end.

The two-year college closed because of declining enrollment and inadequate financial resources that resulted in a loss of accreditation. This came despite a decade-long struggle to keep the institution open that included the 1981 merger with Mississippi College (MC), a four-year sister Baptist institution in Clinton.

While many Mississippi Baptists are familiar with the issues related to the closing of Clarke College, they may not be as familiar with the people — faculty and staff — affected by closing. There's a human side to the closing of an institution.

"The closing was very hard," said Marian Thornton, music instructor at Clarke from 1965-1969, and again from 1985 to the closing. She was also serving as the alumni director at the time of the closing.

All those gathered in the room at the Clarke College Alumni House, adjacent to the former college property, agreed.

"The hurt didn't start the day it closed," someone said, and all concurred.

Others in attendance included:

- ◆ Juanita Williams, for 24 years a teacher of Development Work.

- ◆ Kelton Valentine, spouse of long-time business manager Herbert Valentine who died in 1981, and former secretary, bookkeeper, administrative assistance and book store manager.

- ◆ Juanita West, English and speech instructor from 1969-1973, 1985-1990, and an adjunct instructor at the time of the closing.

- ◆ J. B. Castilow, Baptist Student Union Director for 34 years, retiring in Dec. of 1990.

- ◆ Eddie Ruddick, Bible teacher from 1981 until the closing.

- ◆ James Griffith, president of the Clarke College Alumni Association and former student.

- ◆ Bryan Burt, baseball coach and director of student services at the time of the closing.

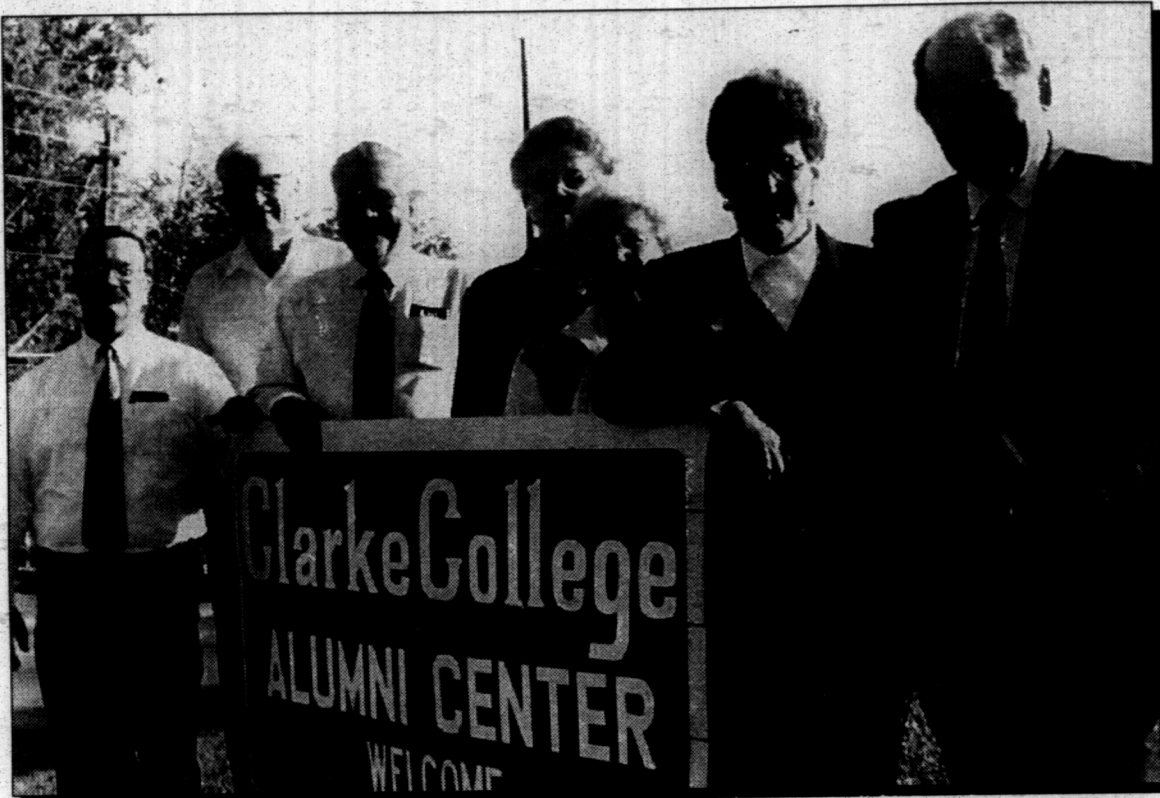
"Clarke College was our life," Thornton continued. "It was home. All of us who knew (the closing) was something that had to be done, set our minds to make it as good an experience as it could be. But it was like a death."

The closing of Clarke did not come as a complete surprise. Many of the faculty and staff had worked diligently to solve the school's problems.

Thornton, as alumni director, had a plan for the financial support of Clarke called 2,000 For 20 in 92. "The goal was to get 2000 former students and friends to commit to giving \$20 a month in 1992," she said.

However, many Clarke alumni were pastors and missionaries who did not have the financial resources to support the school on an ongoing basis. "Clarke students were the ones who went to the poorest places to minister," Eddie Ruddick pointed out. Ruddick was chairman of the Department of Religion and president of the faculty at the time of the closing.

"We found a few alumni who went on to MC, (Baptist-affiliated) William Carey College, or Blue Mountain College to sup-



REMEMBERING THE GOOD DAYS — Former Clarke faculty, staff, and alumni who gathered Oct. 16 to share memories include: (from left) Bryan Burt, James Griffith, J.B. Castilow, Kelton Valentine, Juanita Williams, Juanita West, and Eddie Ruddick. (Photo by Carl M. White)

port us," he said, "but so many of our alumni who went on to other schools, like Mississippi State, gave their support to those institutions."

"I came here knowing the school was in trouble, but I felt a call to come here," Ruddick added.

"That is a good word," chimed in Thornton. "We all felt called. It was like surviving on the mission field. What held us all together was that we all felt a definite call (to Clarke College)."

Kelton Valentine agreed. "We were on our way to Ridgecrest and we visited Clarke College and (President Lowery) Comper. I thought to myself, 'I can't move to Newton!' But every door was open. No doubt, God wanted us here."

The closing of Clarke was like a double tragedy to Valentine. "My husband had invested his life (at Clarke) and I had, too," she said.

"If I had to be a widow, it turns out this was the best place. Why? Because Clarke is like a family," Valentine said.

Juanita West pointed out that the consequences of the closing varied from person to person. "Some people retired; some found other jobs. Some had to leave Newton, while others found jobs out of town and had to commute."

West made mention of several former faculty and staff: Clark Adams, music, now self-employed; Nell Adams, music, now teaching at MC; Linda Alexander, history, now in administration at Holmes Community College; John Dent, Greek and Bible, now with the Baptist Sunday School Board; Sue Ford, computer science, now a computer consultant for a Quitman firm;

Charles Melton, religious education, retired; Lynn Savell, English, now teaching at Newton County Alternative School; Sally Hurt, business manager, unemployed; Wayne Miley, admissions and recruiting, now a pastor and working for the state employment service; James C. Read, Dean of the College, now teaching history at Jones Junior College; Evelyn Williams, financial aid director, now food services director of Newton County Schools.

Frank Harmon, pastor of First Church, Newton since 1983, was pastor to much of the faculty and staff while at the same time served on the Mississippi Baptist

Education Commission during closure discussions. "I was very much caught in the middle," he said.

"We had to deal with a great deal of disappointment, animosity and misunderstanding," he said. "Job security was gone. Many were asking, 'Where do I go from here?'"

Harmon observed that most of the faculty and staff found jobs. "Many of them found situations that were better, certainly with more security." However, it was those closest to retirement age that had the most difficult time, he observed.

"I was an immovable object," Ruddick said. "In 1992 my wife became immobile because of diabetes at age 62."

"Mississippi does not have a diabetic hospital, so I have to transport her to one out of state. This made it impossible for me to go back to a larger pastorate. Meehan Church, where I have been a bivocational pastor, has been very good to me. They have 80 members, give or take a few."

Ruddick has been unable to secure other employment. He and his wife live in a former staff house owned by First Church, Newton.

"My wife and I were both employed at Clarke," said Bryan Burt, former baseball coach and Director of Student Services. "Plus, we lived in campus housing. We had to find jobs and a place to live. I was able to find a job in about a month, but it took my wife longer."

Burt is now headmaster at Newton Academy.

"(The closing) was more than losing a job," Burt added. "It was like losing a friend, a fellowship, a support system, your identity."

Thornton swept her arm to point toward the different rooms of the alumni house, rooms filled with memorabilia. "All the things in these rooms, this is all we have left — except for what is here," she said, pointing to her head and indicating the memories everyone carries from their years at Clarke.

"We have a marvelous legacy," she added. Others in the room voiced agreement.

It is evident by the warm smiles and kind words that a very special bond remains, the blessing of having been touched by Clarke College.

Next week: Clarke staff and faculty bid farewell to their beloved school and offer words of advice to Mississippi Baptists.



SNAPSHOT FROM CLARKE COLLEGE — In a 1990 annual photograph, music instructor Marian Thornton prepares for a rehearsal in the fine arts building on the Clarke College campus. Thornton taught piano, music theory and served as alumni director. (BR special photo)



# Gambling promoters ignoring human toll

By William H. Perkins Jr.  
Editor

As pro-gambling forces continue to celebrate the fifth anniversary of legalized gambling in Mississippi with glittering receptions and glowing reports of financial windfalls for all involved, the human and spiritual toll remains mostly ignored by the industry's billionaire developers and others who have profited enormously during the past five years.

There's Gaylon (not her real name), a Gulfport resident profiled in an Oct. 24, 1996 article in The Baptist Record.

A devout Southern Baptist mother of five, she was sucked into the vortex of gambling addiction after several visits to a casino simply to sample the fabulous restaurant buffet.

She began detouring by the gambling rooms, and before long her ever-deepening video

poker addiction consumed her personal finances, drove her to steal \$30,000 from her children, and ultimately led to a life of prostitution when all the money ran out.

She even considered selling her young daughter for sex in order to feed the obsession. To Gaylon, suicide seemed to be the only solution.

She sought help, and thanks to the intervention of a godly woman in her church and a Christian counselor specializing in gambling addictions, Gaylon began to see light at the end of her dark tunnel.

She was taking one day at a time and was optimistic about winning the struggle to get her life under control.

"Every morning I wake up and promise myself I won't go to a casino," she said.

That was then. A lot of things can change in a year.

"I haven't seen Gaylon in a

couple of months. I don't know where she is; I'm afraid she has 'slipped,'" her counselor said last week, referring to his fear that Gaylon has returned to her previous life of addiction and degradation.

The counselor had arranged for Gaylon to live away from the allure of the casinos in a structured recovery environment, and insisted that she maintain a regular counseling schedule.

"She began to cancel out on the counseling appointments. She went from that to just being a no-show. Then she left the structured environment where she was doing so well, and I haven't heard from her since," the counselor said.

Such behavior is not unusual for a person who has fallen back into addiction, the counselor pointed out.

"I don't know where she is or what shape she's in, but you

can be sure that she's suffering — physically, emotionally, and spiritually. At this time last year, she was near suicide," the counselor said.

Gaylon fought hard, but she apparently lost the struggle to turn her life around.

"While the hollow pronouncements of gambling promoters continue to tout rising benefits from legalized gambling, Gaylon's poignant, world-weary words of a year ago still haunt:

"I would invite (anyone) to come with me and stand outside a casino at 3 a.m. They will see men and women fighting. They will see wives crying. They will see hungry children locked in cars. They will see how wholesome it is."



## Team leadership approach gaining in churches

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

A current trend in church leadership is team ministry, according to Ron Pratt of the Baptist Sunday School Board. Pratt led a conference on Team Ministry this August at the National Conference on Church

Leadership at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

According to Pratt, "A team is a small group of people with complimentary skills committed to a common purpose or goal and for which they are willing to be mutually accountable."

"Notice this definition says complimentary skills, not the

same skills," he said. For example, one may not want all accountants on a financial team; rather, have people with other skills to complement the accountant's skill.

"Teams are an effective way to help people identify their spiritual gifts and empower them," Pratt said.

Pratt gave eight reasons why a church should utilize a team approach to leadership.

- ◆ People are energized by significant challenges.

- ◆ Teams bring people together with different skills, talents, gifts and experiences with a common goal.

- ◆ Teams can be more flexible and can react quicker to the need for change.

- ◆ Teams cut through the bureaucracy, instead of increasing it.

- ◆ Teams develop communication skills that help people resolve problems.

- ◆ Teams create more of a sense of family and bonding.

- ◆ Teams usually have more fun and fellowship.

- ◆ Teams are Biblical.

Pratt pointed to the ministry of Jesus as the model for team ministry. Jesus built a team of 12. As they followed Jesus, they saw things they never dreamed they would see. Jesus modeled team leadership to them when he washed his disciple's feet. He taught them how to be a servant.

"Team builders never lose when they wash feet," Pratt said.

Pratt pointed to two different types of teams: functional and project.

One distinction between the two is longevity. A functional team is long-term or ongoing, while a project team is short term.

Pratt pointed to his own church, First Church, Franklin, Tenn., for an example of a functional team.

In their young adult Sunday School department, there were seven classes, using four different curriculum.

"We wanted to know, what does it take to have life changing Bible study for young adults every Sunday morning?" Pratt said.

In order for Bible study to be life changing, the teachers had to discover the life changing truths in the scripture. They decided to create a Bible teaching team, consisting of the 7 teachers. For this to work, they all had to be using the same scripture, so they chose the Life and Work curriculum.

"The seven teachers focused on the scripture and chose from the text the verses that would be most likely to change lives. No quarterlies or teacher's books were used at the team meeting; just the Bible. We dialogued about the text," he said.

What resulted was a creative sharing of ideas from the Bible. "Now the teachers were ready to go home, get their teacher's book and prepare a lesson for Sunday."

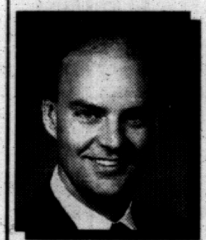
This Bible Teaching Team is a functional team. It continues to work on an ongoing basis. Project teams are different. They are put together to plan one event, like a special fellowship celebration or seminar. Once the project is completed, the team is finished.

Instead of a committee, where all the responsibility rest on the chairman, the team shares the responsibility.

The Baptist Sunday School Board offers several resources in team ministry, such as "The Team Builder" by Frank Lewis and "The Ministry Gifts Inventory," a booklet and software program for determining and recording people's spiritual gifts. Contact your Baptist Book Store for more details.

## Gambling in Mississippi 1992-1997

### Monetary miracle or moral mistake?



## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*My adult sister's entire world revolves around her pet animals. She has little contact these days with friends and family. What should I say to her?*

First, do not make an issue of the animals. Next, get her to spend time with you, even if the dog has to come along. As she broadens her activities, you can suggest that she leave the animals at home. You must understand that the animals may be the only objects with which your sister feels completely safe — a security blanket. Has your sister been hurt by another person? She may have chosen to withdraw to her animals rather than continue to reach out to people. Talk with her about your personal relationship with Christ, and encourage her to attend church. That would be another way to draw her from her dependency on the animals and move her into other relationships. She will learn more from your tenderness and patience than from force or frustration.

*I recently found out my older brother (we're both teenagers) is doing harmful things that could kill him. I don't know whether or not to tell my parents.*

When you find your brother doing these things, let him know that you love him so much that you must tell your parents before a tragedy occurs. He won't like hearing that and will probably bargain with you, saying, "I'll never do it again." Don't believe him. He is crying out for help. Are you willing to risk his anger to save his life? Your brother needs someone to whom he can talk. If your parents have difficulty talking with him, be prepared to suggest someone to whom your brother will listen — Christian counselor, pastor, church youth leader, Sunday School teacher, coach, relative, etc. Parents cannot always be objective in these situations, which increases the importance of surrounding children with proper role models and influential adults.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



# Ministers utilize new phone technologies

By Keith Hinson  
Special to Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Newer telephone technologies can be helpful tools for church staff members, according to a variety of Southern Baptist ministers.

Caller I.D., which allows the recipient of a telephone call to see the name and number of the person calling, generally received high marks from several ministers interviewed by Baptist Press.

"I use Caller I.D. instead of an answering machine," said Johnye Horton, pastor of Aldrich First Church, Montevallo, Ala. "A lot of people don't want to talk to a machine. For this reason, I've told our members, 'If I'm not home when you call, I'll see your name and number on the Caller I.D. unit, and I'll call you back.'"

Larry Carter, pastor of Northwood Church, Greer, S.C., said Caller I.D. has impacted the phone manners of people who call his home. "The Caller I.D. came as a result of numerous caller hang-ups. It is amazing how the calls decreased once the word got

out that this technology was available."

In at least one instance, Caller I.D. may have helped save a man's life, according to R.D. Fowler, pastor of Bethel Church, Lincoln, Neb.

Earlier this year on a Saturday night, Fowler's phone rang with a call from a man despondent over unemployment and family problems.

"He began to talk like he might be suicidal," Fowler recounted. "He would only give me his first name and would not tell me where he was. When I thought he was sounding more and more like he was going to harm himself, I had my wife and daughters call the police from another line in our home. We gave them the number from Caller I.D."

Meanwhile the conversation continued as Fowler tried to convince the caller he needed help, but the man was fearful of legal consequences and eventually hung up.

A couple of minutes later, the police located the man and called Fowler to let him know the man was unharmed.

"He spent the night at the hospital for evaluation and was released the next day," Fowler said. "Later the next night, he called to thank me for being concerned enough about him to try and help."

Even with the advantages of Caller I.D., there is still a downside, according to David L. Davis, pastor of Lakeview Church, San Antonio, Texas.

"When people know you have Caller I.D., at least two things happen," Davis observed. "First, they expect you to check the unit and return their calls, which I don't always do. Second, when you're not home and they call, some may be inclined to think you're not answering their call because you have seen their name on Caller I.D."

But Davis still favors having Caller I.D. in his home.

"I am for it, and I will still pay for it, because I have four girls — and I won't answer the phone for them anymore. Also, Caller I.D. is a good way to avoid calls from phone sales people."

A more controversial phone feature is Call Waiting, which produces a beep in the midst of an ongoing call, alerting a phone customer to another incoming call.

"Call Waiting is an absolutely despicable feature," declared Tom Fillinger, senior pastor of Dutch Fork Grace Community Church, a Southern Baptist congregation in Irmo, S.C.

"If you are going to speak with me, do it. If everyone practices a good communica-

tion ethic, there is no need for Call Waiting."

L. Earl Tew, director of missions for Birmingham (Ala.) Association, acknowledged Call Waiting has some advantages but still weighs in against it.

"I tried Call Waiting for a while, but if I'm interrupted on an important call, it may cause me to lose my focus and concentration," Tew observed. "I do not believe it's in good taste for me to call you and allow someone to interrupt us because I might have Call Waiting."

Tew acknowledged the phone feature has benefits, for example, for people with seriously ill relatives or friends or who are otherwise expecting an emergency call.

Kelly Coffield, pastor of Englewood Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., said he jettisoned Call Waiting in favor of voice mail.

"I had Call Waiting for a while and found it somewhat annoying," Coffield recounted. "When talking to someone, I felt like I needed not to be interrupted, so I switched to voice mail."

Voice mail, known as Memory Call or Call Notes in various parts of the country, is a recording that answers incoming calls when a phone line is busy or goes unanswered.

Unlike an answering machine, which is physically present in a phone customer's home, voice mail operates out of a telephone company's digital circuits.

When a caller leaves a message, the voice-mail subscriber is notified by either a message transmitted to a digital beeper or by a stuttered (or "broken") dial tone.

Coffield said one disadvantage of voice mail is the need "to remember to check for the 'stutter tone' to see if there are messages."

He suggested a variety of other technologies also have facilitated his unique situation. Call Forwarding, for example, allows him to send church calls to his home.

The forwarded calls come to a special "Ringmaster" number, which causes his phone to ring with a distinctive ringing pattern, instead of the usual series of single rings common to most telephones.

"This allows me to answer specifically for the church when it rings this way," he said.

Joe Brooks, pastor of Brodie Road Church, Biloxi, found himself protected from additional technology when the suggestion was made during budget planning that the church provide him with a beeper.

"Though most of my people have these types of communication tools and have readily accepted them, most felt I was already in touch with people enough and that it would be too much of an intrusion," Brooks said.

## Ministers praise cellular telephones

By Keith Hinson  
Special to Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Ministers who have cellular phones often describe them as a tool that increases efficiency and enhances communication with church members.

Bill Reed, minister of education at Shades Mountain Church, Birmingham, Ala., describes the cellular phone as "a time-saver."

"If you're on the way to the hospital and you get halfway there, the secretary may call and tell you of someone else who has been admitted to the hospital," Reed said. "It's enabling us to do a better and more efficient job."

Gary C. Redding, pastor of First Church, North Augusta, S.C., said cellular phones have been a valuable tool during outreach activities.

"It has been a very great help when I'm going to visit prospects and having difficulty finding their house," Redding explained.

"I have used the phone to call the people I am visiting by appointment, and they have clarified directions to their home. Some have even visually guided me as they looked out

their window or stood on their porch watching my headlights come down the street."

Many pastors spend significant time traveling in their automobiles, noted Murray Wilton, pastor of Southside Church, Huntsville, Ala.

"You'd be surprised how much time a minister spends in his car," Wilton observed.

"I do a lot of my calling when I travel, just keeping in touch with folks with a quick call."

Some ministers indicated they are protective of the amount of time they spend on the cellular phone, which usually accrues per-minute charges for incoming and outgoing calls — both local and long distance.

"Only a few people have my cellular number," said Larry Carter, pastor of Northwood

Church, Greer, S.C. "It has been useful that this number is a long-distance charge, so it is only used when I really am needed."

Tom Fillinger, pastor of Dutch Fork Grace Community Church in Irmo, S.C., said he does not answer incoming calls on his cellular phone but simply uses it to check messages with his secretary, wife and voice mail.

"It is a functional tool I use daily that saves me much time and makes my travel very efficient," Fillinger said.

That increases efficiency and enhances communication with church members.

Bill Reed, minister of education at Shades Mountain Church, Birmingham, Ala., describes the cellular phone as "a time-saver."

## NOBTS opens prayer center

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Round-the-clock prayer and Internet computer technology joined forces at New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) Oct. 9 when a 24-hour intercessory prayer center officially opened on the campus.

With the electronic address nobtspray@juno.com, a prayergram for "Southern Baptist missionaries world-wide" went out via the Internet when NOBTS President Chuck Kelley and T.W. Hunt, one of Southern Baptists' foremost teachers on prayer, pushed a computer button together with Renate Viveen and Kim Leech, two NOBTS students who first asked Kelley for a 24-hour prayer center on campus.

The realization of their dream, the Intercessory Prayer Center, is located in the middle of student housing on campus. Funds for the renovation work were provided by Ruby Batey of Franklin, La.





# SWBTS instructor to leave over journal flap

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP) — Southwestern Seminary apparently has avoided a faculty trial by coming to terms with a professor removed from his classroom for criticizing seminary administrators.

Jeff Pool, 45, an assistant professor of systematic theology, will not return to the classroom but will receive salary and benefits through the current academic year.

Administrators at the seminary in Fort Worth pulled Pool

from his teaching duties just before the seminary's fall term started in late August. That move closely followed Pool's public charges of "academic censorship" against the seminary.

"I really was removed from teaching not because of my teaching, but because I voiced dissent about actions of the administrators of this institution," Pool said.

On the advice of the seminary's attorney, the dean of the seminary's School of Theology,

Tommy Lea, limited his response to a prepared statement.

"The seminary guidelines require that personnel matters be handled confidentially," Lea said. "The administration has acted in the best interests of the seminary and Dr. Pool in accordance with the seminary's policies and procedures."

"Dr. Pool has shown himself to be a capable scholar in his discipline of systematic theology. He has demonstrated commendable interest in his students."

"However, the parties have agreed that Dr. Pool should exercise his teaching ministry in another institutional setting," Lea said. "The seminary has attempted to provide Dr. Pool and his family financial security to allow him to find another position without interruption of income or loss of benefits important to his family."

The controversy began last year, when Pool edited an issue of the seminary's *Southwestern Journal of Theology*.

The disputed issue of the journal examined the Southern Baptist Convention's "Baptist Faith and Message" doctrinal statement.

Seminary administrators objected to Pool's use of authors identified as SBC "moderates," fearing it would alienate trustees and other conservative convention leaders. The seminary suspended publication of the journal.

Pool offered the articles to Smyth & Helwys Publishing of Macon, Ga., which published them in a book called "Sacred Mandates of Conscience: Interpretations of the Baptist Faith and Message."

In a preface to the book and in subsequent interviews, Pool called Southwestern's refusal to publish the journal "academic censorship."

Seminary officials have denied the censorship charge on two counts.

First, they noted they waived the rights to the rejected articles, freeing their authors to publish them.

Second, they said the decision not to publish the journal was made by an editorial board comprised of faculty.

Pool acknowledged not all Southwestern faculty agree with him, but he contended the journal's editorial board was coerced by pressure from Southwestern President Ken Hemphill and academic administrators.

His ouster from the classroom sends a signal to faculty that "self-criticism" within the institution will not be tolerated, Pool said.

"Southwestern is going to have trouble putting anyone here that will be anything other than 'yes men,'" he predicted. "They won't be able to exercise a self-critical principle of the institution."

Rather than negative and damaging, self-criticism — the ability to analyze and discuss strengths and weaknesses — is positive and helpful for an institution such as a seminary, Pool insisted.

"An individual is not necessarily disloyal because he criticizes an institution or a denomination," he said. "But those thoughts and comments may grow out of his very loyalty. ... It is vital that Baptists do not lose the principle of internal criticism. If there is no self-criticism, how do we call ourselves to account for our actions?"



## Mississippi College

**As the second oldest Baptist school in the U.S., we are proud of our heritage and are committed to continuing our mission of molding the future leaders of our churches, state and nation.**

To show our gratitude for the support of Mississippi Baptists, we look for opportunities to serve our faith:

- The Institute for Christian Leadership at Mississippi College provides academic and practical training for pastors, evangelists, lay leaders & church staff persons.
- The Baptist Student Union offers *Priority* and *Generations* (musical groups), *Adopted* (praise and worship team), *Crossection* (drama group) and Action Ministry teams to be a part of worship services.
- Faculty, staff and students serve as missionaries, providing medical, language and religious services to those in need.
- Our WHJT-FM is ranked in the top 20 nationally among Christian radio stations.

We are proud of the part we have played in shaping Baptist history. Our distinguished alumni include six Southern Baptist Convention presidents, the President and Treasurer of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention Board and the President of the International Mission Board.

**Mississippi College and Mississippi Baptists...Moving forward into the 21st Century together.**

**Thank You for continuing to support us!**

## MBC update

**Mississippi College**  
**Christian Service Alumni** complimentary breakfast. 7:30 a.m., Tuesday, Oct. 28. First Church, Jackson - Fellowship Hall East. MC President Howell W. Todd, speaker.



# Clinton again vetoes partial birth ban bill

WASHINGTON (ABP) — President Bill Clinton vetoed a measure Oct. 10 that would have banned a controversial late-term abortion procedure.

The U.S. House of Representatives approved the "Partial-Birth Abortion Act," which had been slightly altered by the Senate in May, Oct. 8.

The measure would have imposed fines and up to two

years in prison for doctors performing the procedure, which involves partially extracting an unborn fetus through the birth canal before ending its life.

The ban approved by Congress contained an exception in cases where the procedure is used to save the life of the mother. Under the bill, a doctor on trial for performing the procedure in such a case

could seek a hearing before the state medical board on whether the conduct was necessary to save the life of the mother.

Clinton, who supports a woman's right to choose an abortion, had insisted on another exemption for cases when continuing a pregnancy poses "serious harm" to a woman's health.

"Unfortunately, [the bill]

does not contain an exception to the measure's ban that will adequately protect the lives and health of the small group of women in tragic circumstances who need an abortion performed at a late stage of pregnancy to avert death or serious injury," Clinton said in his veto message to legislators.

Clinton asked lawmakers to work in a bipartisan manner on new legislation. He reminded them that, as governor of Arkansas, he signed a bill barring third-trimester abortions with an appropriate exception for life or health of the mother.

Clinton's veto is expected to stand. The House passed the ban with a veto-proof margin of 296-132. But the Senate failed to get the two-thirds vote necessary to override a presidential veto when it approved the modified version of the bill, 64-36.

Rep. Charles Canady, R-Fla., author of the bill, released a statement disputing Clinton's call for a health exemption. "Partial-birth abortion is never necessary," Canady said.

"President Clinton knows that thousands of partial-birth abortions are performed primarily in the fifth and sixth months of pregnancy on the healthy babies of healthy mothers. But the president is unmoved by the facts," Canady said.

A spokeswoman for Canady said the House will wait until 1998 to attempt an override of the veto. She said that in addition to needing time to shore up votes in the Senate, lawmakers have little time to attempt an override this year due to the GOP leadership's goal of ending the first session of the 105th Congress by the end of October.

Clinton vetoed an almost identical bill last year. While the House voted to override the 1996 veto, the Senate sustained it.

## Supreme Court lets decisions stand

WASHINGTON (ABP) — The U.S. Supreme Court refused Oct. 6 to review three court rulings restricting the activities of abortion protesters.

The high court also refused to disturb a lower-court decision forbidding a Missouri county from receiving family planning funds because of its parental-consent policy.

message, but rather to prevent her from engaging in objectionable activity."

In another case rejected by the high court, a sidewalk counselor who had counseled against abortion for years in a lawful manner through a church ministry was told that an injunction imposed on Operation Rescue of California

also applies to him. The injunction bars the anti-abortion group from protesting, picketing, counseling, or distributing literature within 15 feet of a San Mateo County abortion clinic.

The California Court of Appeals for the 1st District said that Robert Lynn Cochran's involvement with the anti-abortion organizations activities for several weeks was enough to justify associating him with the group and bind him to the same injunction leveled against the group.

While upholding the 15-foot buffer zone restriction, the California court overturned an injunction excluding protest-

the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Sacramento, Calif., were arrested for disrupting the ecumenical prayer service for praying out loud for the unborn. They lost their bid to bring suit against officers at the inaugural event for then newly elected Gov. Pete Wilson. They also failed to show impartiality by the federal district judge whose nomination had been recommended by Wilson when he was a member of the U.S. Senate.

In a separate case, the high court sidestepped a decision that allowed a nonprofit group that distributes federal family planning funds to deny the funds to the County of St. Charles, Mo., because of the county's parental notification policy.

The county's policy requires parental consent for adolescents to receive prescriptive medications or intrusive medical procedures, including some forms of contraceptives.

The county filed a motion in state court seeking the funds under Missouri law. But the Missouri Family Health Council moved the case to federal court and asked that the case be dismissed.

In a decision upheld by the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, a district court ruled that the case fell under federal jurisdiction and dismissed the lawsuit.

ers from activities within 250 feet of the physician's apartment, saying that it was possible to strike a more precise balance between preserving privacy and maximizing the opportunity for public expression.

The court also overturned an injunction that forbade approaching patients, clinic staffers, and others once that person makes it clear that he or she does not wish to be approached. "Because the provision limits speech to that consented to by the listener, it burdens speech which is peaceable but unwelcome to the listener," the California court said.

In a third case, the Supreme Court declined to intervene in a dispute over actions at a 1990 inaugural event at a Catholic church.

Abortion opponents inside

## Retired BSU directors



**BSU DIRECTOR'S REUNION** — Retired Baptist Student Union (BSU) directors from across Mississippi gathered recently at Mississippi College for the BSU 75th anniversary luncheon. Those in attendance included (from left) Ray and Opal Smith, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 48 years; J.B. and Virginia Castilo, Clarke College, 34 years; Joe and Rose Cobb, Northeast Mississippi Community College, 28 years; Ralph Winders, retired MBCB Student Work Director and his wife Virginia; Etta Lee Farmer, widow of Louie Farmer, University of Southern Mississippi; Jerry Merriman, MBCB Student Work Director, and his wife Rhonda. (Photo by Carl M. White)

Barbara Bell, a regular abortion protester outside a Brookline, Mass., clinic, argued that her First Amendment rights were violated by court orders prohibiting her from certain activities.

The order barred her from her practices of wearing an apron similar to that worn by clinic staffers, shouting loudly outside the clinic and entering a 50-foot buffer zone where it was claimed that she blocked the way of clinic patients and staff.

The Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts ruled that the First Amendment does not shelter Bell's "persistent violation of an existing court order."

The ruling, which the Supreme Court refused to review, stated that the purpose of the court injunction "is not to suppress Bell's anti-abortion

## Trinity Baptist Church Celebrates the 7th Anniversary of Our Pastor: Dr. Jim Butler

Seven years ago Dr. Jim Butler was called as Pastor of three Memphis area churches. Within the first few months of his ministry he was asked to merge the three congregations into one church, sell two church buildings, purchase land in Southaven, design an entirely new church plant, conduct a fundraising campaign, and begin construction so this new church could relocate from Memphis to Southaven.

What began as a small congregation of 200 people has now grown into the second largest church in our Mississippi Convention, averaging over 1,450 in Sunday School. In our seven years of existence we have seen 1,268 people make public professions of faith and had another 1,914 join our church by transfer of letter. God has used our pastor's loving spirit and leadership ability to make all this possible.



Dr. Jim Butler, Pastor  
Trinity Baptist Church  
Southaven, Mississippi

**Bro. Jim We Love You!**  
from  
**Your Trinity Family**



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

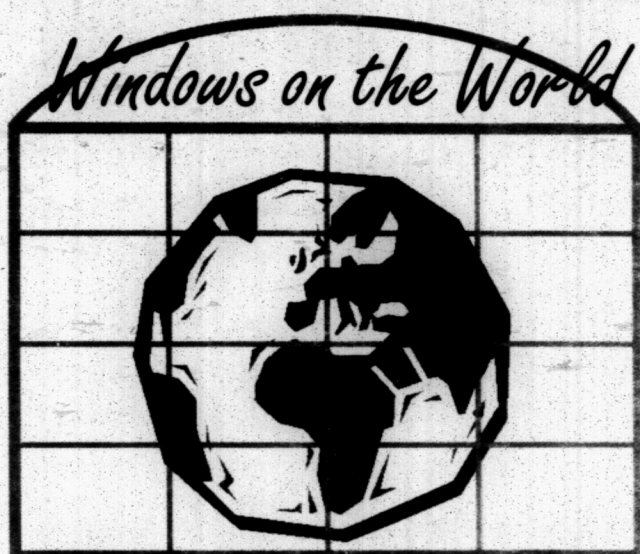
# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

October 23, 1997

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

## MISSISSIPPI INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE

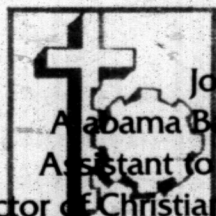


OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 1, 1997  
CAMP GARAYWA, CLINTON, MISS.

*This will be a great time of sharing ideas, cultures and informal discussion with other students from all around the world!*

## MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHAPLAINS ASSOCIATION

*Annual Fall Banquet*  
Tuesday, October 28, 1997  
Baptist Building - Skyroom  
4:45 p.m.



### SPEAKER

Joe Bob Mizzell

Alabama Baptist State Convention  
Assistant to the executive secretary

and director of Christian Life, Public Affairs and Chaplaincy



### MUSIC

Cathy Taylor, support staff of Woman's Missionary Union, MBCB,  
and a member of Hillcrest Baptist Church, Jackson,  
where her husband is pastor

For more information or to make reservations, contact Elaine Smith, Missions Extension and Associational Administration Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at 601/968-3800 or toll-free at 800/748-1651.

## COME SHARE EXPERIENCES OF RECONCILIATION ACHIEVED



December 12 and 13, 1997  
Duncan-Gray Conference Center  
Canton, Mississippi



### WITH:

**Steve Small**, pastor  
True Light Baptist Church

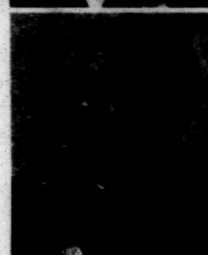
**L. Graham Smith**, director  
Church Music Dept., MBCB

**Beverly Sonnier**, consultant  
D.C. Baptist Convention, Washington, D.C.

**Richard Brogan**, consultant  
Missions Extension Dept., MBCB

**Gene Fant**, pastor  
Center Terrace Baptist Church, Canton

**Lloyd Blue**, director  
Church Growth Unlimited, Mendenhall



### Sponsored by:

Missions Extension Department - Richard Brogan, consultant  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

### REGISTRATION FORM

*Reconciliation Achieved Celebration*  
Duncan-Gray Conference Center  
Friday and Saturday - December 12 & 13, 1997

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (DAYTIME) \_\_\_\_\_ Conference is limited to 60 persons

**Please send Registration Form to:**  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
Attn: Richard Brogan, MEAA  
P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530



# GA Summer Camp Counselors Needed!

*Camp Garaywa needs female college students to serve as counselors for GA Camp and to make a difference for eternity. A potential counselor must have completed the freshman year of college and be available for the following dates of camp:*



## 1998 GA SUMMER CAMP DATES

June 1-5  
June 8-12  
June 15-19  
June 22-26  
June 29-July 3  
July 6-10  
July 13-17  
July 20-24



GA's grades 1 and 2 Mother/Daughter Overnight: June 19-20

GA's grades 1-6 Mother/Daughter Overnight: July 10-11

Acteens Camp: July 24-26

*If you are interested in serving as a 1998 GA Summer Camp Counselor, call 1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 for an application.*

## CAMPUS DAYS FOR GAS AND ACTEENS

Blue Mountain College

William Carey College

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Mississippi College

**Missionaries • Basketball • Testimonies  
Cheerleaders • Music**

**Cost \$7.50**

*(Includes: basketball game, meal, program and limited insurance)*

For more information, contact the  
WMU Department at 800/748-1651 or  
• 968-3800 in Jackson.

## Queen's Court

Camp Garaywa November 14-15, 1997

Friday 5 p.m. - Saturday Lunch

*For Acteens Involved in StudiAct  
(Queen Level and Above)*

**\$23 per person**

*(includes meals, lodging, crafts and limited insurance)*

**What to Bring:** sheets or sleeping bag, pillowcases, towels,  
casual clothes, comfortable shoes, Bible,  
paper and pencils, personal items

**Registration Deadline: Friday, November 7, 1997**

Registration Form - Queen's Court

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Person sending in registration \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people \_\_\_\_\_ x \$23 per person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to WMU  
Mail to: WMU - Queen's Court  
PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530**



## REGIONAL SINGLES RALLIES

January 16-17, 1998

Cost: \$5 at the door



### CONFERENCES:

**"Dating With Marriage In Mind"**  
led by Dianne Swaim, Little Rock, Ark.



**"A Cheerful Heart"**  
led by Justin Fennell, Lakeland, Fla.

**"Leadership"** led by Tim Cleary, Nashville

**"Self-Esteem"** led by James Haynes, Biloxi

Music by Paul Stupka, Belden

### January 16

FBC, Olive Branch

6:30 p.m. Registration

7:00 p.m. Conferences

8:00 p.m. Break

8:30 p.m. Rally

For more information

call 601/895-5481.

### January 17

Associational Family Life

Center, Collins

2:30 p.m. Registration

3:00 p.m. Conferences

4:00 p.m. Break

4:30 p.m. Rally

For more information

call 601/765-4689.

For more information contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at 800/748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800.

## a Growing Marriage



*A Marriage to Live for!*

*...And they will become one flesh. Genesis 2:24*

1998 SEMINAR WITH DR. GARY CHAPMAN

February 20-21

Broadmoor Baptist Church

### HUMOROUS.

*How to communicate in the midst of conflict.*

### CHALLENGING.

*How to avoid financial bondage.*

### EXCITING.

*How to make sex mutually fulfilling.*

### RELEVANT.

*How to rekindle love.*

*You are invited*

*to a Reconciliation Rally/Fellowship*

at Grace Temple Baptist Church

Rossie Francis, pastor

3916 15th Street, Gulfport

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**Monday, November 10**

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**HOUSE TOPS**



# Gregory says he regrets role in SBC fight

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) — Seven years later, fallen insider Joel Gregory says he now regrets his efforts to help a conservative faction gain charge of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Gregory, 49, told a conference in Birmingham, Ala., that he reluctantly entered the fray and only because leaders of the conservative faction pledged to "broaden the tent" of denominational leadership.

Conservative leaders did not keep that promise, Gregory told ministers at an Oct. 6-7 "Leadership with Integrity" conference sponsored by the Nashville, Tenn.-based Baptist Center for Ethics.

The bigger tent "obviously was an illusion," Gregory said during a dialogue session at the conference held at Vestavia Hills Church. "And I wish I had been out of the tent."

Gregory told of being pres-

sured by both sides as moderates and conservatives battled for control of the nation's largest non-Catholic faith group during the 1980s.

"With visibility in Southern Baptist life in the '80s came an increasing pressure to do something," Gregory said.

Gregory said a few prominent conservative ministers endured criticism for resisting that pressure.

"There were those of us who

felt like Southern Baptists would be best served if every last person was not completely camped up," Gregory said.

"There were others who felt like this was cowardice, it was abandoning the ship. If you were not with us, you were against us," he said.

During a key presidential election in 1990, Gregory said he sided with conservatives based on "a promise that there was going to be a broader coalition, the tent was going to be enlarged."

Gregory said he and fellow pastors including John Bisagno, Ken Hemphill, and Charles Fuller "thought that was going to be the agenda."

"Obviously that didn't happen," Gregory said. "That was regrettable. I don't mind saying at all I have little taste for any of it. It's not my inclination. It's not my gift."

"I look back on that now from the distance of five years being totally out of it, looking at the larger issues churches face, human beings face, the isolation of my own life, I really do feel a lot of us were like Don Quixote tilting at windmills amid the larger issues of our day."

"I wish I had never touched it, regardless of whether I'd been identified as a life-long fence sitter," he said.

In response to a question about whether he would ever again preach regularly, Gregory confessed, "I don't know what to do about that."

After Gregory's resignation from First Church in Dallas in 1992, he said he received a few invitations to preach.

Those gradually fell off and ceased completely after he wrote "Too Great a Temptation," a book chronicling his rise and fall at First Church, Dallas in 1994.

Gregory said he found support from unexpected places, including non-Baptist ministers, Baptist ministers from across the country, and high-school classmates from whom he had not heard in years.

There were some people who knew what I needed more than I did," he said.

Gregory, who now works for a publishing company, acknowledged "more recently, either by curiosity or providence, I am being asked to preach." He said he is accepting, but not seeking, such opportunities.

"I am having an increasing number of invitations to speak," Gregory said.

"I have made the decision I will not lift a finger to open a door to find a place to speak. If in the providence of God those doors open ... then I have come through those doors."

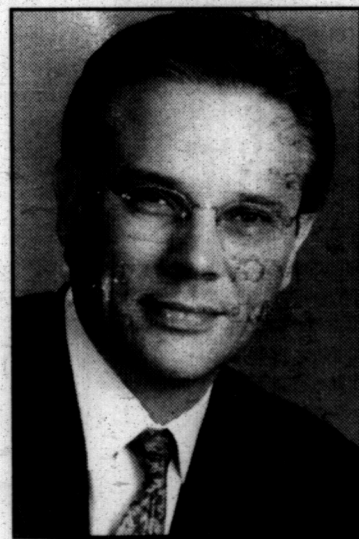
"I think I may help people in the pews more with my preaching now than I did at some other times," Gregory said. "That is very much a pilgrimage."

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If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.



# Some public schools installing Internet blocks

By Clay Renick  
Special to Baptist Press

CANTON, Ohio (BP) — It was an odd mix with eight pastors, a public school computer, and pornographic Internet sites.

Richard Wingerter had invited local church leaders to a test of computer software at a high school in Canton, Ohio.

Wingerter, an elected school board member and Baptist layman, got some triple-X Internet addresses from a computer technician and started typing.

However, a message appeared instead of pictures.

"Violation."

"Those addresses were blocked," Wingerter explained. "This latest equipment has really shut the whole thing down."

Officials in Stark County installed X-Stop, a software program that blocks offensive sites on the Internet's World Wide Web by specific addresses. They instituted the filtering protection after a junior high school teacher gave students access to on-line pornography last year.

As more public schools hook up to the Internet, they also face the problem of on-line pornography. Some use software to block the material. Others refuse under the guise of free speech.

Ohio's 600 school districts have Internet access available from the state level. Stark County has an educational service center that supplies the Internet to 28 of those school districts. X-Stop protection covers 10,000 computer terminals and 90,000 students in the 28 districts.

Other school leaders in Ohio haven't followed the example. Wingerter can look from his office and see two districts just miles away which won't install the equipment.

"We've made the commitment," Wingerter said. "Others could do it."

"It boggles my mind why they won't."

Officials from X-Stop have identified 47 different categories of undesirable material on the Internet, encompassing 90,000 sites focusing on porn, hate groups, suicide and bomb making.

The X-Stop system uses a computer group called a "mud crawler" to identify each undesirable web site by address to increase accuracy.

"We're in this because we feel a moral obligation," said Reed Fisher, communications director for the company, based in Anaheim, Calif.

The American Family Association (AFA) endorses X-Stop. "They not only block the

porn, they block the chat room conversations," said Pat Trueman, with the AFA. "It's foolproof as far as I can see."

"Without blocking technology or a closed Internet system, children are at risk of sexual exploitation on-line," said Donna Rice Hughes with Enough is Enough, an organization in the fight against pornography.

Enough is Enough recently warned parents against Internet permission forms that release school officials from liability.

"They think it's like the field trip waver," said Shyla Welch, another Enough staffer. "You need to contact your school system and find out what they're doing."

Enough is Enough has framed a response letter parents can use for the Internet permission forms to encourage schools to provide prevention from the Internet's dark side.

The response letter notes in part, "I appreciate the opportunity for children to use the Internet for research and educational purposes. I would be abdicating my responsibility as a parent, however, if I signed an Internet Use Policy without knowing that protection is firmly in place for my child, and other children, from Internet dangers. Those of us responsible for the safety of children must recognize there are two clear and present dangers to children on the Internet: online predators' easy access to children, and children's easy access to pornography."

Enough is Enough can be contacted (703) 278-8343 in suburban Washington.



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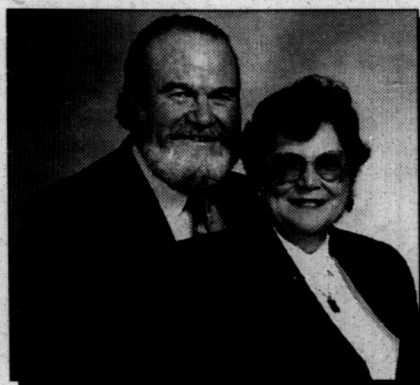
**Kenneth and Lynn Baker**, missionaries to the Ivory Coast, are in Mexico for a one-year assignment (address: Apartado 20, Bulevares, Edo de Mexico, 53140 Mexico). He was born in Booneville and considers St. Augustine, Fla., his hometown. The former Lynn Powell of North Carolina was born in Morganton and considers Asheville her hometown.

**Richard and Martha Beal**, missionaries to Venezuela, are on the field and receive their mail at P.O. Box 025323, CCS 3014, Miami, Fla. 33102). A native of Florida, he was born in Pensacola and also lived in Panama City. The former Martha Lyle of Mississippi was born in Laurel and lived in Natchez.

**Virgil and Amy Cooper**, missionaries to Japan, are on the field (address: 62-14 8 chome, Okamisawa, Misawashi 033, Japan). He was born in Water Valley and also lived in Aliceville, Ala., and Vicksburg. She is the former Amy Gunter of Andalusia, Ala.

**Clifton and Cathy Curtis**, missionaries to Burkina Faso,

are on the field (address: B.P. 130, Tenkodogo, Burkina Faso). They are natives of Mississippi. He was born in Greenwood and she, the former Cathy Pratt, in Batesville. Both consider Winona their hometown.



**Ken and Martha Cooper**

**Ken and Martha Cooper** have returned to the States (address: P O Box 211, Myrtle, MS 38650). In August of 1959 they were sent to The Mariannas Island of Guam by the United States Air Force. They helped organize and start the first Southern Baptist missionary work on Guam when the Calvary Baptist Church was formed. The Coopers returned to Guam again in

1962 and he was called as interim pastor. He was ordained and called to pastor the Aschaffenburg Baptist Church of the European Baptist Convention, while serving in the Air Force at Darmstadt, Germany. He retired from the Air Force in 1975 and returned to Mississippi. In 1994, they re-assigned to serve the English speaking congregation in Munich, Germany, as career missionaries with the Foreign Mission Board (now the International Mission Board). The Coopers will be on furlough until June 17, 1998, when they will return to Germany.

**Robert and Margaret Fortenberry**, missionaries to Botswana, are in the States (address: 3147 Monroe Rd., Ellisville, Miss. 39437). He was born in Moss Point and considers Jackson his hometown. The former Margaret McKinley was born in Elizabethtown, Ky. Daughter of Southern Baptist missionaries, she grew up in Gweru, Zimbabwe; Wake Forest, N.C.; and Miami, Fla.

**Vic and Sharon Johnston**, missionaries to Brazil, are in the

States (address: First Baptist Church, 425 Ford, Columbia, Miss. 39429). He is a native of McComb. The former Sharon Blackwell was born in Tylertown and considers Kosciusko, her hometown.

**Tony and Kathy Latham**, missionaries to the Philippines, are in the States (address: 4829 Merida Ave., Fort Worth, Texas 76115). Both are natives of Mississippi. He is from Jackson, and she is the former Kathy Jennings of Kosciusko.

**Donald and Jo Redmon**, missionaries to Costa Rica, are in the States (address: 2008 W. 14th St., Panama City, Fla. 32401). He is a native of Panama City, Fla., and she is the former Jo Eubanks of Pontotoc County.

**Steve and Vidonia Smith**, missionaries to Argentina, are on the field (address: Casilla 223, 8300 Neuguen, Argentina). He was born in Santa Monica, Calif., and considers Hattiesburg his hometown. The former Vidonia Smith was born in Houston, Texas, and considers White Oak, her hometown.



## MISSIONARY NEWS

### REVIVAL DATES

**Temple, Big Point, Pascagoula:** Nov. 2-5; Randy Johnson, evangelist; Wm. Lance Hoggatt, pastor.

**First, Flora:** Nov. 2-5; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Neil Davis, Baldwin, evangelist; Tim Moak, Flora,

music; Rickey Blythe, pastor.

**Newhebron (Lawrence):** Nov. 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Dean Register, Hattiesburg, evangelist; Riley Harper, Greenville, music; Charles E. Davis Sr., pastor.

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## 'Ellen' star furious over rating; threatens to quit ABC's sitcom

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Ellen Degeneres has balked at an additional parental warning attached to her Oct. 8 show by ABC-TV, a subsidiary of The Disney Company.

"Due to adult content, parental discretion is advised," the network warned. The episode included an extended kiss between Ellen and another female. The sitcom additionally has carried a "TV-14" rating this season, which means it "might be inappropriate for children under 14," according to TV industry definitions.

The added parental warning left Degeneres threatening to quit, according to The New York Times Oct. 9. Degeneres denied making the threat in a brief TV tabloid interview Oct. 10.

Degeneres called the Oct. 8 warning "blatant discrimination," according to The Times.

"The only other ABC show that's ever had this label is 'N.Y.P.D. Blue,' and that has nudity and violence," Degeneres said.

Degeneres, in TV Guide's Oct. 11-17 cover story, gave further vent to her concerns about her sitcom — and her homosexual advocacy and lifestyle.

She told TV Guide she wants to be remembered after her sitcom as "someone who helped change people's minds."

"I still think in 30 years we'll be dealing with homophobia, and it would be nice to have 'Ellen' on Nick at Nite along with Mary Tyler Moore, someone that (gay) kids could identify with."

Degeneres' comments parallel those she made in accepting an Emmy for comedy writing in September: "On behalf of the people — and the teenagers especially — out there who think there is something wrong

with them because they're gay: There's nothing wrong with you, and don't let anyone make you ashamed of who you are."

In the TV Guide article, Degeneres responded to comments by ABC's entertainment president, Jamie Tarses, that "Ellen" "won't be the lesbian dating show" and that the network is taking "baby steps" in the show's unfolding focus on Ellen's homosexuality.

Said Degeneres, "And when I hear 'baby steps,' that makes me feel bad. It's like they're saying, 'OK, you're gay, and we're tolerating this, but don't show us how you really would be, don't kiss a girl on the lips.'"

The magazine reported that Degeneres had pushed for her character being depicted this year as having a more intimate, lasting relationship with a woman, to "make Ellen more of an adult, to make the stories more real." To which ABC's Tarses replied, "And we're behind it, but it's premature to say where it's all going."

According to The New York Times article, ABC has nixed a scene from an upcoming Ellen episode showing Ellen and her female companion walking toward a bedroom, presumably to have homosexual sex.

As to her personal life with actress Anne Heche, Degeneres acknowledged to TV Guide reports of them possibly having a baby.

"For a long time, I wanted a baby," she told TV Guide. "But right now, I'm too selfish. I just can't." Of Heche's desire to become pregnant with a baby, Degeneres said, "Yeah, Anne usually gets what she wants, but what you don't know is that I'm the boss of this relationship."

Degeneres described her relationship with Heche by saying, "... this is it for me, for both of us, forever. ... If Anne goes (before her in death), I want to go, that's how strongly I feel."



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



**Calvary Church, Durant**, recently held a recognition ceremony for its GAs. Each girl received badges for mission adventure work completed for the year. Pictured (from left, front row) are Audrey Perry, Hailey Hathcock; back row: Morgan Hathcock, Courtney Jones, and Martha Ellington, leader.

**First Church along with Indian Springs Church, Laurel**, will host pianist Anthony Burger of Nashville,

Tenn., on Nov. 13 at 7 p.m. One of gospel music's premier musicians, Burger delivers more than Christian entertainment to listeners. He also communicates an inspirational story through his testimony of God's healing. At the age of eight months old he was learning to walk in a walker. As he was going through the hallway, one of the wheels got caught on the grate of the floor furnace and the walker turned over, throwing him down on the heater and burning his legs, face, and both hands. He received third degree burns. His achievements include the Dove nomination in 1996 and 1997.



**Calvary Church, Durant**, recently held a Pinning ceremony for its RAs. Each boy received medals according to the points earned for various activities and verse memorization throughout the year. Pictured (from left, front row) are John Ellington, leader, Chase Caldwell, Lee Hathcock, Eric Burden, Ronnie Burden, assistant leader; back row, Allen Burden, Dennis Harkins, and Jessie Perry.

## STAFF CHANGES

**Steve Clark** has been called as minister of education/outreach at First Church, Pascagoula, effective Oct. 12. Clark was formerly on staff at Grove Level, Dalton, Ga.



Clark

**Olyn Roberts** has announced his retirement effective Nov. 1. He will be available for revivals, supply, and standup comedy. For 46 years, Roberts has served as a pastor, pioneer missionary, director of missions, and led construction teams to Alaska from 1986-

1995. Roberts can be reached at 3960 Highway 15 North, Louisville, MS 39339, phone (601) 773-5968.

**Beulah Church, Magee**, has called **James L. Merck Jr. (Lee)** as pastor effective Sept. 14. Merck previously served at 38th Avenue Church, Hattiesburg, as youth pastor. A native of Lucedale, Merck will complete his course work at William Carey College at the end of October.

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**Mt. Moriah Church, Lincoln County**, will observe Old Fashioned Day on Oct. 26. Activities will include Sunday School, 10 a.m.; services, 11 a.m.; followed by dinner on the grounds. The day will conclude with a gospel singing. The guest speaker will be Danny Dodds, pastor of Southway

Church, Brookhaven. Danny Moss is pastor.

**Bayou View Church, Gulfport**, will sponsor a Fall Festival, Oct. 31, from 6-8 p.m. Call Leisa Culpepper at (601) 865-8166 for more information.

**The Stained Glass Tour**, Clay Crosse, Jaci Velasquez, and Sunday Drive, will be in concert at First Church,

Jackson, 7 p.m., Nov. 7. The tour, sponsored by World Vision and True Love Waits, began in Bend, OR on Sept. 18 and will continue throughout Spring 1998 going into 80 cities across the country.

**The Hoppers** from Madison, N.C. will be in concert at Harmony Church, Crystal Springs. For more information, call (601) 892-1121.



**Acteens of Clarke Venable Church, Decatur**, recently received several awards for completing various steps of their Studi-Act. Mae Walker, escorted by her father, John Walker; and Kelli Harris, escorted by her father, Chris Harris; completed Queen Regent in Service. Missy Johnson, escorted by Kris Amis; Keri Keith, escorted by Steve Pearson; and Jamie Rainer, escorted by Nathan Stamper; completed the Queen Regent. Whitney Harris, escorted by Corey Amis, received the Queen with Scepter. Girls who received their crown for Queen are Blair Anderson, crown bearer Ashley Amis; Krissi Harris, crown bearer Cole Harris; and Jennifer Carson, crown bearer, Jeremy Carson. The theme for the coronation was Reflections.



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**ACCEPTING RESUMES:** Full-time minister of music/adult activities. Send to: Search Committee Chairman, Trace Ridge Baptist Church, PO Box 456, Ridgeland, MS 39158.

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**FOR SALE:** 1990 Wheeled Coach church bus, Ford-7.3L diesel engine. 52,000 miles, 30 passenger with recliners, \$25,000.00. First Baptist Church, Leland, MS 601-686-7357 or Yancy DeLoach 601-686-9947 (evenings).

**CUSTOM STAINED GLASS** windows for churches and homes. Stained Glassworks, Inc. 1-800-605-2970.



# BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Three individuals were recently named to the Order of the Golden Arrow at Mississippi College (MC). Those named were Sara Nell Grice Middleton of Winona; William Ralph "Bill" Dunlap, a native of Houston; and Finis Sims Calvert, a native of Meridian, and currently a resident of Pensacola, Fla. Middleton graduated from MC in 1954 and went on to pursue a degree in nursing. Dunlap, an artist, received a degree in education from MC in 1967. Calvert, owner of Calvert

Equipment Co. received his degree in business and economics from MC in 1964. This award is presented annually at the Awards Luncheon during Homecoming.

William Carey College graduates, Linda Mucha and her daughter Mary Margaret Mucha, (right) participated in the Teachers



## The Muchas

Exchange program held recently on the Hattiesburg campus. The Teachers Exchange is an innovative designed to offer teachers of gifted children an opportunity to learn a variety of teaching techniques and other information from their peers. The Muchas are both teachers at Gulfport High School.



Students of the Winters School of Music at William Carey College's Hattiesburg campus will soon benefit from a listening laboratory through the generosity of the McWethy Family Foundation. James B. McWethy approached the school about funding a project for the music unit which could serve as a memorial to Donald and Frances Winters, founders of the Winters School of Music. The McWethy gift of \$16,000 will allow the college to complete construction of an area for the laboratory and for storage of recordings, tapes, and CD's; to furnish the lab with six custom designed listening carrels; and to purchase six listening systems with CD, cassette tape, and LP playing capability. Dedication of the facility is scheduled for Fri., Nov. 14, as part of the 1997 Homecoming activities. For more information, call (601) 582-6175. Work study students Beth Mitchell of Tallulah, La., and Jay Spirakis of Pensacola, Fla., (pictured) organize materials that will be used to complete the laboratory.

## NAMES IN THE NEWS



John Chouccoli was recently licensed to the ministry by Interstate Church, Shaw. He is available for pulpit supply and may be contacted at (601) 754-3059. Chouccoli is pictured with his wife Wanda, and Robert Haney, pastor.

Thelma Winborne, organist at First Church, Magee, will retire on Oct. 26. She has served as pianist and organist for over 60 years. First Church will honor Winborne in the morning worship service on Oct. 26 and a reception will be held from 2-4 p.m.



Winborne



Mosser family

In recognition of Pastor Appreciation Day, Oct. 12, Bayou View Church, Gulfport, held a luncheon for its pastor, Thomas O. Mosser and his family. The church also celebrated the day as a third year anniversary for Mosser as pastor.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

### PEN PALS NEEDED

Editor:

This letter is being written to let your youthful readers or people who work with young people in grades 7 through college know about a special missions opportunity. This is the fourth year of the Christian Corresponders (Pen-Pal) project sponsored by the National Fellowship of Baptist Educators (NFBE) in conjunction with the International Mission Board. In it Chinese students who are taking English and who want to correspond with an American student and practice their English are matched with a Christian young person in America.

For many Chinese students, this is their first contact with a Christian. Some of the American corresponders have had an opportunity to share their faith with their Chinese friends. The NFBE provides guidelines to help each correspondent write letters that are appropriate in Chinese society and at the same time find ways of witnessing for Christ.

We will need at least 5,000 names by December 15 of students who want to participate this year. We especially need college students, but will be able to use corresponders in grades seven or higher. This will make a great project for a Sunday School class or a youth group such as Acteens, Challengers, etc. Any person who would like further information may call me at (205) 822-4106 or write me at Samford University Box 2305, Birmingham, Alabama 35229 to request an information and sign-up sheet.

John Carter  
Birmingham, Ala.

### SEARCHING FOR BROTHER

Editor:

During a recent mission trip to Ligores, Honduras, I met a precious lady who asked me to help her find her brother who lives in Mississippi. His name is John Bailey and he would be about 60 years old. The name of their father was H. S. Bailey. If living, he would be about 85 years old. If you could help me with this, please write me at 135 Jervis Mims Rd., Hattiesburg, MS 39401 or call (601) 543-0721.

Juanita Wise  
Hattiesburg

### HELP EVANGELISTS

Editor:

This year I am serving as the Pastor/Advisor for the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists.

As you know, our Southern Baptist Convention will be meeting in Salt Lake City in June. Plans are underway to win the lost through "Crossover" which is being sponsored by our North

American Mission Board (NAMB).

We want and need our vocational evangelists to be a part of this effort. However, many will not be able to go so far because of lack of funds.

Many pastors have their expenses paid by their churches.

Evangelists must pay their own way. Pastors receive their regular salary. Evangelists lose a week of income.

Let me encourage the home churches of our evangelists to give toward their convention expenses. Also, if the friends of our evangelists would send them an extra check and designate it "Crossover." This would be a blessing!

Let's help our soul-winning evangelists to get to Salt Lake City to win souls.

David Shofner  
Petal

### ARGENTINA BOUND

Editor:

We leave Wed., Oct. 15, for Argentina where we will serve for six months as International Service Corps workers.

We will be helping new Christians in the Buenos Aires area as they organize missions into churches.

We earnestly desire prayer support. Our address will be: 1450 Rivadavia, Apt. 2-C, Pergamino, Argentina.

We served in Argentina as our first mission field (1948-52) and our first two children were born there. Thank you.

Indy and Charles Whitten  
Clinton

### PRAYER COMES FIRST

Editor:

Something happened this summer at Hopewell Baptist Church that I must share with your readers.

I have been pastoring churches for 23 years. There has been many exciting times worshipping and fellowshiping with God's people. I know a lot of pastors are struggling and praying about the spiritual condition of the church where they are serving.

This summer we had an old fashioned cottage prayer meeting prior to our revival date. Never have I felt the spirit of God more any greater. People stood, knelt, lay on the floor crying out to God for revival. Fact, God honors our obedience and faith. The revival was the best one I have ever been in. God's power was so real. Brother Rodney Anderson from Hickory Baptist Church preached from the word of God each night with great power and zeal.

During the week there were 23 rededications. Many came to the altar to pray for loved ones and lost people.

Churches, please don't have another revival meeting without having cottage prayer meeting first. God longs to

send revival. Our part is to seek his face in prayer. In his service.

Mack McDonald, pastor  
Hopewell Church  
Newton

### FOLLOW THE RULES

Editor:

Is there any real reason for having a Constitution and By-laws? If not, why not? If so, why so?

Were Mississippi Baptists led to ignore and violate rules and procedures as outlined in the Constitution and By-laws of the Mississippi Baptist Convention 1994-1996? If so, was this done knowingly and willingly?

Did the fact that the convention's constitution and by-laws requires a two-thirds majority vote to make changes enter into a decision to ignore rules and procedures?

What are the results of violating rules and procedures agreed upon by the body and adopted for its protection, guidance, and unity? What are the penalties for such violations?

Are most Mississippi Baptists so ill-informed and unknowing that they need their leaders to do their thinking and decision-making for them? Are just a few among us to dictate policy?

When did it cease to be an honor for an institution to belong to and be controlled by Mississippi Baptists?

When did the convention's wishes, desires, principles, dreams, and control become so distasteful that any one of its institutions needed to free itself from convention command? Did all seek to be loosed?

The Southern Baptist Convention has successfully directed its institutions using the same basic rules and procedures as those of Mississippi Baptists; will not these rules work in Mississippi?

When the world follows its rules and procedures, but Baptists violate and circumvent theirs, are they then "Salt and Light" to a lost and dying world?

Bobby T. Hood  
Sand Hill

### POTTERS' LEGACY

Editor:

I wanted to write in regard to the story on David Potter in the Sept. 25 edition of The Baptist Record. I served as a missionary journeyman in the Dominican Republic in the mid 1970s and saw the legacy of his parents at Santiago Baptist Church.

The Potters left a powerful legacy with the congregation of Santiago Church. The people respected them as committed witnesses. Their example made a strong impact upon me as I knew and worked with the people there. The Potters were the first martyrs I had known about in our time. Nina Shea, author of "In The Lion's Den," makes the powerful statement that more Christians have died in our century for simply being Christians than in the nineteen centuries after Christ's birth. Missionaries take a great risk when they follow Christ to a mission field.

It was a statement to how God moves through tragedy to learn how Susan and David Potter have followed the Lord and made examples of their own lives in the years since their parent's death. The author is right in saying their parents would be proud and God is honored by the examples that have been passed on. I have never forgotten the lives that were changed in the Dominican Republic because Paul and Nancy Potter obeyed God's call.

Mike Carroll, pastor  
Center Hill Church  
Hanceville, Ala.

## HOMECOMINGS

**Oak Grove, Philadelphia:** Oct. 26; 105th anniversary; services, 10:30 a.m. and noon meal in fellowship hall; Keith Fulton, Edinburg, guest speaker; SonRise, Philadelphia, singing; Paul H. Leber, pastor.

**First, Runnelstown, Petal:** Oct. 26; Sunday School, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m.; followed by dinner and afternoon of fellowship; Henry Freeman, pastor.

**Maybank, Hattiesburg:** Oct. 26; 15th anniversary; Sunday School, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m.; lunch served in fellowship hall followed by Myers Family in concert; George Berger, director of missions, Lebanon Association, speaker; Bob Robinson, pastor; Jerry Purvis, music.

**Cranfield (Adams-Union):** Oct. 26; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered

dish, noon; 1:30 p.m. singing with The New Sound of Joy, Adams County; Richard Pass, Andalusia, Ala., guest speaker; Tony Mullins, pastor.

**Glendale (Washington):** Oct. 26; Clyde Pullen, former pastor, will preach during 11 a.m. service; fellowship meal at noon; singing under the direction of Robert Nichols, 2 p.m.; Keith Dendy, pastor.

**First, Marks:** Oct. 26; 90th birthday; Gordon Sansing will speak at 11 a.m. worship service; Harry Tillery, former minister of music and youth, music; fellowship meal following morning services; Steve Wells, pastor; Tommy Smith, minister of music and youth.

**Macedonia, Meridian:** Nov. 16; 11 a.m.; covered dish meal in fellowship hall, noon; 1 p.m. singing; Jason Gross, pastor.



## LIFE AND WORK

### Be sharers

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

By Geneva England

Bee Sharers. Yes, honey bees are one of God's most fascinating creations. They busily work from sunup to sundown, sharing in the survival of their species. They deliver their quota—a thimbleful of honey—to the hometown hive during a mere 42-day lifespan; then they return to the field to die without one complaint. What a beautiful testimony to unselfish teamwork. We should learn from this example of God's perfect order in nature. Our mission is to share in the work of Christ.

**Give Generously (9:6-9).** These rich Second Corinthian verses are the basis for the expression, "You can't outgive God!" He owns everything,

ranging from the smallest seed to the largest salary; he owns life itself. Furthermore, he loves us and wants to give to us generously. The Bible teaches that God does not give his children stones for bread, but will, like the father of the prodigal son, give us the best he has.

Notice the four "all's" named in verse 8: "make all grace abound to us" (What we do for Christ's sake seems to return; we become the recipients rather than the givers.); "all sufficiency" (God provides our every need.); "all times" (God's gifts endure forever; man's are temporal.); and "have all you need" (We may not be wealthy, but we enjoy inner contentment that unbelievers cannot fathom or



England

experience.) Giving blood is an example of how scriptural gift-giving works: when a person gives blood, his own supply replenishes itself and is strengthened, while the receiver of blood is also blessed.

Our part involves first giving ourselves to the Lord and then following his will for our lives. God doesn't drive us to give our time, talents, and money, for he "loves a cheerful giver." Though each of us determines freely what we will give, our willingness and generosity please him.

Paul appealed to the Corinthian's generosity by explaining the needs of the Jerusalem believers. They were having a hard time financially since following Christ. Because of their suffering, the Corinthian church had promised a liberal gift. Paul arranged for Titus, his faithful fellow worker, and two other honorable brethren to travel to

Corinth to collect this gift. His letter urged the Corinthians to be ready.

**Reap a Harvest (9:8-14).** Three blessings will be reaped though a person's tithes and offerings: one by the giver (vs 8, 10, 11, 14), one by the needy (v.12), and, most importantly, God will be glorified (vs. 12-13). The donor receives special blessings from the act of sharing, from the prayers offered on his behalf by the recipient, and especially from God's outpouring of grace. Hence, givers are blessed in whatever they give whether large or small. The widow's mite is a good example.

Moreover, man's generosity honors God twofold: the giver praises God through giving and the recipient praises God for his care and provisions. Such cases are not hard to find because of God's marvelous love for his children.

Tears rolled down the cheeks of one young missionary as he told how he had surrendered in faith to follow God's call to a

foreign field. He didn't know how he would finance his family's needs; yet just when he needed financial aid, several unexpected supporters stepped forward. God was glorified in the missionary's testimony; the supporters were blessed in helping spread the gospel, and the unsaved heard the message of God's salvation and love.

**Exert a Positive Influence (9:12-15).** Paul taught that contributing generously to people's needs reflects a positive witness of God's indwelling grace. He earlier commended the Macedonian Christians for giving out of "extreme poverty" to the needy in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:1-5). He is now pleased with the Corinthians' positive witness. These examples teach us to share our monetary blessings as well as our unselfish love, time, and service.

Let's learn from these and the masterful sharers—the honeybees!

England is a member of First Church, Grenada.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Treating others unselfishly

Genesis 13:5-18

By Jason Bird

Being in right relation with God always affects one's relation with others. Abram demonstrated his faith in God by being generous in his dealings with his nephew when conflict arose between the two. His example is a model for dealing with conflict.

**An Example Of Unselfishness (13:5-9).** Abram and Lot's prosperity caused the conflict between the two. As they moved their herds into Canaan, the two had to share the land with the Canaanites and Perizzites who also lived in the land. Abram and Lot had to

search to find adequate food and water for their flocks. This led to inevitable confrontations between the hired hands of each.

Abram could have asserted his rights as the recipient of God's promises and demanded the best of the land. Instead, he again trusted God and allowed Lot to choose which part of the land he wanted to claim as his own.

Abram's choice is a model for believers in settling disputes. Too many times we wish to assert our rights and exercise authority over others. But God's call is one of humility and putting the needs of others ahead of our



Bird

own. Abram's generosity exemplifies an unselfishness that all believers can follow.

**An Example Of Selfishness (13:10-13).** Lot did not share Abram's generosity. Apparently not concerned with the conflict nor his uncle, Lot only concerned himself with what was best for Lot. He looked and saw the most beautiful land and chose all of it for himself. This reveals a hint to the inevitable consequences of his choice when the writer states, "This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah." Lot made a selfish choice and would later pay a great price for his selfishness.

If we were honest, most of us would have to admit that we are more like Lot than Abram. Given a choice, we would use our own senses to try and determine what is best for us in the long run.

Was Abram unconcerned about what would happen to his flock? Certainly not. Abram knew that wherever he went, God would take care of him, just as God had promised. Believers need to remain aware that trust in God sometimes goes against human reasoning and logic, but it is always the best choice.

**A Repetition Of God's Promise (13:14-18).** Abram's choice to trust God obviously pleased him. God again spoke to Abram and repeated the promise he had made concerning the land being given to Abram's offspring. In giving Lot the choice of the land, Abram had really lost nothing—it would all belong to him one day anyway. Abram knew God was in control of his life and he trusted God completely. Again, the writer of Genesis notes Abram responded to God's goodness by building an altar and worshiping him.

When we are consumed by

trusting God and being obedient to him, the strife and conflict of this world loses its importance. One of the great paradoxes of the kingdom of God is that a believer can gain by losing. Jesus stated this best when he reminded his followers that "whoever exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (Matthew 23:11).

Believers make a greater statement in a pagan world when they humbly trust God with the circumstances of their life than when they are loud and demand their rights. If Christ does not make a difference in the way we relate to those around us, then we need to question whether Christ has really made a difference at all. Abram's unselfish dealings with Lot are a blueprint of how we can honor God and trust him by putting others first.

Bird is pastor, 15th Avenue Church, Meridian.

## FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

### Pray confidently

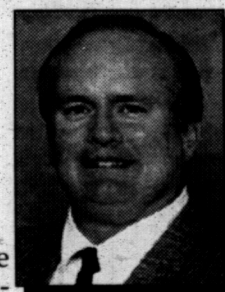
Daniel 9

By Wayne VanHorn

Prayer is the single most important factor in everything a believer does. Daniel prayed after considering a prophecy of Jeremiah (see Jeremiah 25:11,29:10). The prophecy indicated that God would visit his people and restore them to their land after seventy years. It is generally believed that the Darius of Daniel 9 should be dated toward the beginning of the Mede-Persian rule, about 539 B.C. Remembering that Daniel was taken into exile in 605 B.C., the time for God's visitation seemed imminent. Jeremiah's prophecy became the catalyst for Daniel's prayer. Daniel's prayer is that of a pastor interceding for

his sinful people before a just and compassionate God.

**Painful Confession (9:3-6).** The autobiographical account in 9:3 indicates that Daniel sought the Lord in an intense way. Prayer, supplications, fasting, sackcloth, and ashes combine to portray Daniel in an urgent and fervent light. If the Lord was about to visit his people soon, no time could be wasted. Prayer was the best preparation. Daniel began his prayer by noting several attributes of God. He is great and awesome. He keeps his covenant and lovingkindness for those who love him and keep his commandments (9:4). God's faithfulness is the common



VanHorn

denominator in this affirmation by Daniel. In contrast, the people were not faithful. Daniel uses the inclusive pronoun "we" to identify with his people. "We have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly, and rebelled..." (9:5). Just as the heaping up of attributes in 9:4 highlighted God's faithfulness, the heaping of various terms for sin and wrongdoing highlighted the people's lack of faithfulness (9:5). Daniel continues with his confessional tone in 9:6 by declaring that he and the people had not listened to God's prophets. Daniel thus shares a secret of prevailing prayer. Prayer is effective when it includes an honest acknowledgment of one's own failure and lack of merit.

**Profound Supplication (9:18-19).** Having acknowledged the fault of the people and God's perfect righteousness in judging his people, Daniel

appealed to God to hear their supplications and to look upon their desolations. The basis of his appeal was not the people's merit, but God's compassion (9:18). Had Daniel appealed to the Lord to intervene based on some supposed merit of the people the supplication would have fallen on deaf ears. Daniel's prayer was effective because the basis of his appeal, the very compassion of God, was real. Daniel was concise. He asked God to hear, to forgive, to take action for the sake of his city and his people (9:19).

**Prompt Answer (Dan. 9:20-23).** The effectiveness of Daniel's prayer can be measured in the promptness of God's response. Effective prayer does not always receive an immediate answer. In Daniel's case, it did! Daniel related how Gabriel came to him with God's answer before he was finished praying (9:20-21). Now that is a swift response. Gabriel came to give Daniel insight and understand-

ing, presumably about the confession of sin and the anticipated restoration of God's people. The interesting point for our lesson on prayer is the fact that Gabriel told Daniel that God had given him commandment at the beginning of his supplication. Gabriel further revealed that Daniel was "highly esteemed." Daniel's perseverance and faithfulness to the Lord, his refusal to compromise, and his determination to live for God were acknowledged and appreciated by God. In turn, Daniel had only to begin praying and the answer was on the way before the prayer was finished. We are reminded of Isaiah 65:24. Has God changed? Does he not wait to hear and answer the prayers of those who devote their lives to him? Remember, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (KJV; James 5:16b).

VanHorn is pastor, First Church, Columbia.



# RA program inspires lifetime commitment

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Jim McGee directs one of the largest RA (Royal Ambassador) programs in the United States, with an emphasis on developing Christian leaders among boys in his church. The Pensacola, Fla., congregation has about 2,500 in attendance each Sunday, and more than 150 RAs in grades one through six.

In a small town in Texas, meanwhile, Robert Adams leads another of Southern Baptists' most successful RA programs with about 45 boys. The church has fewer than 200 in Sunday school every week, and only about a fourth of the RA members are Baptists. The emphasis is on reaching the entire community.

As Southern Baptist churches nationwide prepare to observe Royal Ambassador Week, Nov. 2-8, the two churches demonstrate the dynamic flexibility possible through Royal Ambassadors. After 89 years, there are now more than 170,000 RAs nationwide in more than 12,000 churches.

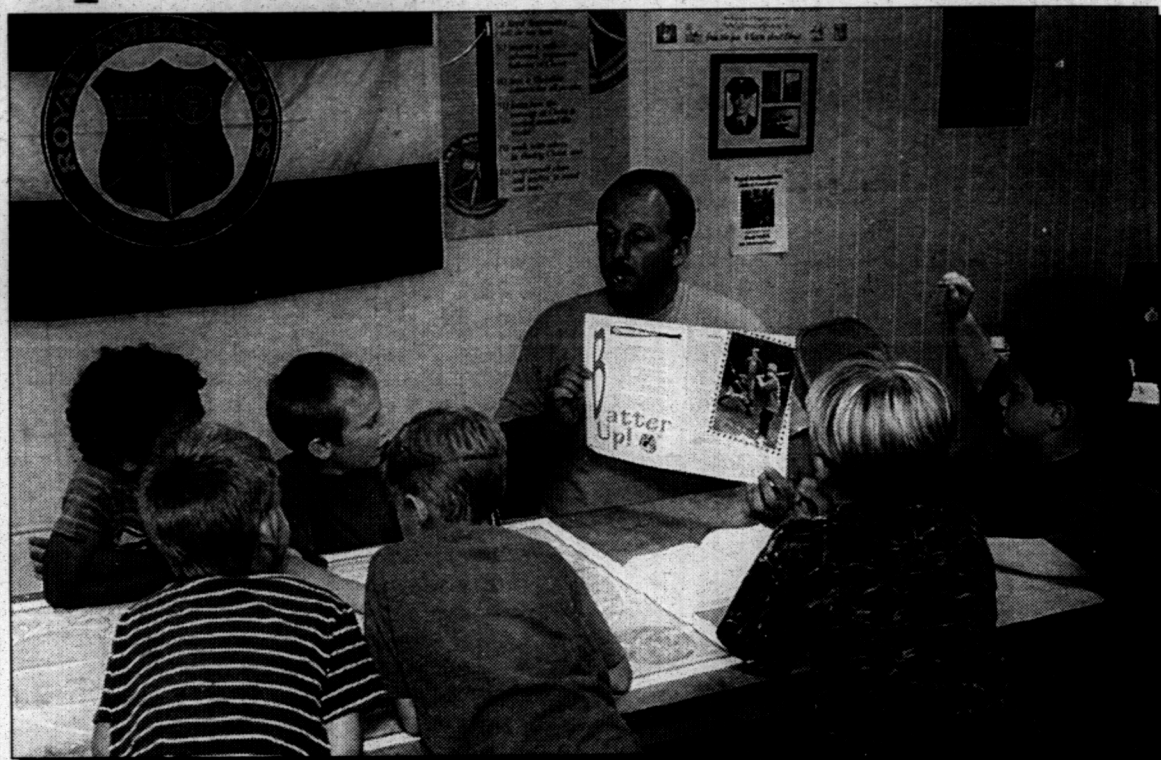
The ministry remains Southern Baptists' most effective tool for teaching boys about the importance of reaching a lost world for Christ — and giving them the leadership training, confidence through individual achievement and practical skills to carry out that mission.

In addition to the primary goal of missions education, RAs also receive merit awards in a variety of spiritual and practical disciplines. Bible memory, camping, recreation, uniforms, teaching on the plan of salvation, missions involvement — all contribute to a balanced program encompassing boys' spiritual, social, mental and physical development.

"When the basic principles of Royal Ambassadors were formed, the characteristics of boys served as guidelines," according to the RA leadership guide published by the North American Mission Board. "Royal Ambassadors capitalizes on what boys enjoy doing."

This year's RA Week theme is "Following Jesus' Footsteps."

The Royal Ambassadors program was



**AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST** — Ken Barton, director of the Royal Ambassadors program at First Baptist Church of Grayson, Ga., teaches from the North American's Mission Board's *Lad* magazine about a missionary in Germany who used a baseball league to help introduce children and their families to Jesus Christ. Missions education remains the core of the Royal Ambassador program, which will be spotlighted in churches Nov. 2-8 during Royal Ambassador week. Additional activities — from campcraft, to model building, to Scripture memory — also help nurture the spiritual, physical and emotional development of children in grades 1-6. Barton, a professional firefighter who has directed the Grayson RA program for 17 years, is the lead "counselor" for boys in grades 1-3. (BP Photo By James Dotson)

started by Woman's Missionary Union in 1908 and led by that organization until it became the responsibility of the Brotherhood Commission in 1957. As of this summer, the comprehensive range of RA materials are being developed and produced by the new North American Mission Board, although strong leadership networks in many states and local associations also support local churches in planning and coordinating activities.

For McGee, RA director at Olive Church in Pensacola since 1975, the ministry has

been a lifelong commitment inspired by a dedicated RA leader when he was a child. Jack Sprayberry became a mentor and friend who later helped him find a job with the company he has worked with since college.

"I would not be where I am today without that man in place," McGee said, noting in recruiting leaders he always suggests men consider those who made a big impact on their own lives.

While leadership materials are comprehensive and detailed, they are also designed with flexibility in mind. In addition to the "classic" approach to structure and organization, there is now a simplified club-style version called EZRA (Easy RA), and both can be adapted to fit local needs.

"If you have Christian men who are sincerely interested in boys and are out there working with them on a week-to-week basis, those men can have an impact on the boys' lives," McGee said, noting the broad-based involvement contributes to the total Christian development of the boys. For many of the boys, there is no other male Christian influence.

RA leaders often are "planting a seed" that may result in the occasional missionary or minister, or more often the committed Christian layman, husband and father so important to the ministry of the church, McGee said.

Whatever the emphasis and methodology chosen by local churches, North American Mission Board missions education leaders stress their commitment to continuing the tradition of excellence in supporting the wide range of materials available for use by RA groups.

In the future, new tools such as quarterly videotape programs also are planned, according to Tim Seanor, director of missions education for NAMB and former director of Royal Ambassadors at the Brotherhood Commission.

"The future is bright for Royal Ambassadors at the North American Mission Board," Seanor said. "We are committed to producing the kind of missions education materials that until now we could only dream about."

## SBTS begins four-year program

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Trustees of Southern Seminary (SBTS) unanimously approved creation of a four-year college, dedicated a new conference center building, and addressed other matters of business in their Oct. 13-14 semiannual meeting.

Trustees approved Mohler's recommendation to create the James P. Boyce College of the Bible as the first four-year Bible college associated with the six Southern Baptist seminaries, though two of the seminaries have undergraduate-type baccalaureate programs. Named for the founding president of Southern Seminary and set for opening Aug. 1, 1998, the Boyce college will replace the academic program of the seminary's Boyce Bible School which currently offers associate degrees and certificate programs.

"There is no debate at Southern Seminary over the great central doctrines of the Christian faith," seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr. said. "There is no debate at Southern Seminary about the importance of inculcating a Christian worldview in an age in rebellion against the truths of the Word of God. There is no debate at Southern Seminary in terms of the character of the institution and the convictions, the confession indeed, that frame who we are and what we believe and what we teach. We are not absent without leave as an institution on the issues of front-line

theological importance."

Having "anchored" the seminary's direction in the Bible, Mohler said Southern is now moving forward with momentum. "The energies that have been devoted in recent years to redefinition and redirection are now directed to forward momentum."

The president reported the seminary has 629 new students this semester, with an on-campus enrollment of 1,292, a 14.24% increase over last year. Although some off-campus programs will yet enroll students and other centers have not yet reported, Mohler said total enrollment for the seminary stands at 1,639 students as of Oct. 11. Complete figures for total enrollment will not be available until the end of the semester.

The seminary's financial standing, Mohler added, is sound. "The 1996-1997 year will go down in history as the greatest year in development income for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary," he said. The seminary received more than \$4.5 million in gifts, compared to \$3.6 million in the previous year.

In addition to finishing the fiscal year "in the black," Mohler reported strong growth over the previous year in the seminary's long-term investments, from \$68 to \$82 million; total assets, from \$112 to \$131 million; and endowment, from \$57 to \$67 million.

## Bibliocipher

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H UHVF HAV UHVF, KHQ  
SRNSUUSTY DX YKE TCZS  
DT CUU YKS SCVYK! QKH  
KCXY XSY YKE BUHVE  
CIHLS YKS KSCLSTX.

MXCUZX SDBKY: HTS

Clue: L equals V

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Six Thirty.